Urban Poverty Deepening in Metropolitan Cities

1640. SHRI JAGMOHAN : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether urban poverty has been deepening and per capita availability of land in the metropolitan cities is declining ;

(b) whether after the recent 'Economic Reforms' and promulgation of New Housing Policy rents and land prices have shot up in these cities ;

(c) whether Nehru Rozgar Yojana and other Government schemes have failed to make any dent on the problem ; and

(d) what measures have been taken or are being contemplated, to check the growing imbalances and arrest the fast-worsening situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P. K. THUNGON) : (a) Though specific data pertaining to the estimates of Urban poverty in the Metropolitan cities is not available, as per the estimates of urban poverty at the national level as made by the Planning Commission it is found to decline from 28.1% in 1983-84 to 20.1% in 1987-88. Further, as per the Report of the Expert Group on Estimation of proportion and Number of poor constituted by the Planning Commission, the incidence of urban poverty has declined from 42.15% in 1983 to 40.12% in 1987-88. It is a fact that per capita availability of land in the Metropolitan Cities has been declining due to increase in population and influx of migrant population to these cities from the small towns and rural hinterland of the country.

(b) Increase in rent and land prices in Metropolitan cities has no direct relevance to the Economic Reforms and New Housing Policy. In fact, New Housing Policy aims at arresting this trend by way of increased supply of serviced land and rental housing through various administrative and legislative reforms.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Apart from implementing the existing schemes effectively, the Government is going to take up an integrated scheme for amelioration of urban poverty known as the Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme which was announced by the Prime Minister on 15th of August, 1994. The specific objectives under the new programme, will be, interalia, the skill upgradation and employment generation. The scheme in proposed to be implemented in Class-II towns of the Country and is expected to help arress the influx of migration to the metroplitan cities.

Neglected Town Planning

1641. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) what are the reasons for neglected Town Planning in the country;

(b) the problems arising as a result of neglected town planning; and

(c) the steps taken to improve the situation especially in populated cities ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P.K. THUNGON) : (a) Town Planning is a State subject and falls within the jurisdiction of State Governments. Depending on policies of State Governments and their Urban Development Authorities and Municipalities, the degree of effectiveness of town planning varies from town to town and State to State. No generalisation is, therefore, possible regarding neglect of town planning or reasons thereof.

(b) The problems which arise in a situation of neglected town planning includes shortage of housing and infrastructural facilities, proliferation of slums and squatter area, deteriorating environmental conditions, traffic congestion etc.

(c) The steps taken by the Government of India include :

(i) Introduction of centrally sponsored scheme for mega cities to be applicable to Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Hyderabad and Banglore for improvement of infrastuctural facilities thereof.